



# The Illinois Hires Heroes Consortium

## Consortium Background

The *Illinois Hires Heroes Consortium* (IHHC) is a group of Illinois employers who recognize the great value veterans bring to the workplace and who thus operationalize the term "veteran-friendly" by committing to implement a series of military veteran recruitment, training, and retention practices. Members of the Consortium are Illinois employers who commit to at least three initiatives - one in each aforementioned human resource category.

An initiative of Illinois Governor Pat Quinn, the Consortium will mobilize public attention and employer commitment to addressing the issue of veteran employment. Consortium members also benefit from hiring some of the most dedicated and skilled employees our nation has to offer.

The Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) and Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) will assist participants in meeting the simple goals that will lead the employer on the path to recruiting and retaining high-quality veteran candidates. Employers will be publicly recognized and will be allowed to use the Illinois Hires Heroes logo to market themselves as veteran-friendly. Businesses can take the pledge at [www.illinoishiresheroes.com](http://www.illinoishiresheroes.com) or contact IDVA or IDES for further information.

## Consortium Commitments

*Members commit to at least one initiative in each of the following categories:*

### Recruiting Practices

- List job openings on Illinois Job Link and on the Heroes to Hired (H2H) job websites.
- List job openings on Illinois Job Link and participate in any of the statewide Hiring Heroes events held at various dates throughout the year
- List job openings on Illinois Job Link and become an Army Partnership for Youth Success (PaYS) Partner.
  - ✓ **Translate military skills at CareerOneStop Business Center** - Identify relevant military experience by matching your civilian job opening to military careers that use similar skills, visit [Civilian-to-Military Occupation Translator](http://www.careeronestop.org/military-translation)

### Human Resources Training

- Participate in the Illinois Department of Employment Security's training regarding military-to-civilian skills and lexicon translation. Alternate delivery options include training furnished by Operation Employ Veterans by Easter Seals, America's Heroes at Work by the Department of Labor – Veterans Employment and Training Service, and/or Syracuse's University's Institute for Veterans and Military Families.

- Participate in the Department of Labor – Veterans Employment and Training Service’s “USERRA 101” and “USERRA 102” online training modules.

## **Retention & Support Practices**

- Sign the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Statement of Support Retention and support Practices and highlight on company media and web-based platforms veteran hiring/employment support programs and initiatives on a recognizable tab/page for quick/efficient access.
- Establish/promote an employee affinity group and/or corporate mentorship program for military veterans.
- Utilize the Illinois Department of Veterans’ Affairs or National Able for post-employment support to assist veterans overcome their particular challenges.
- Pay National Guard and Reserve members the differential between their normal wage and their National Guard wage when they are activated for duty.

***Interested employers should contact the Illinois Hires Heroes Consortium to discuss possible participation by applying at [www.illinoishiresheroes.com](http://www.illinoishiresheroes.com). If there are any questions, please feel free to contact IDES or IDVA at:***

IDVA:	Roshelle Moats	<a href="mailto:Roshelle.Moats@illinois.gov">Roshelle.Moats@illinois.gov</a>	312-814-1661
IDES:	Gideon Blustein	<a href="mailto:Gideon.Blustein@illinois.gov">Gideon.Blustein@illinois.gov</a>	312-793-9842

## **Consortium Follow-Up**

Upon acceptance, each member of the Consortium is responsible for implementing its selected commitments. Staff from the Illinois Department of Employment Security and the Illinois Department of Veterans’ Affairs will assess compliance with each stated commitment at a pre-determined timeframe. Employers who are found to be non-compliant will be allowed to remedy the situation within a reasonable timeframe. Employers found to be non-responsive or non-compliant after a set time frame will be removed from the Consortium, the Consortium’s website, the Consortium’s marketing materials, and will not be accorded the exclusive use of the IHHC logo.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Recruiting Practices**

#### **1. What is Illinois Job Link?**

A: Illinois Job Link (IJL) is a new, Internet-based job search tool that features current job openings and includes both statewide and nationwide job banks. By enrolling in IJL, veterans will be able to navigate job opportunities; may qualify for assistance from IDES's veteran employment representatives; and will be included in the main database used to search for qualified veterans as IDES works directly with major employers seeking to hire veterans. Most importantly, it's free to employers and job-seeking

veterans. IDES staff is standing by to assist employers in listing their positions directly on IJL. For further information on IJL or assistance in enrolling, please visit: <https://illinoisjoblink.illinois.gov>

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## **2. Who is H2H.jobs?**

A: H2H.jobs is a free powerful tool for job seekers, with a multitude of innovative resources to help you find your next job. The site offers easy-to-use search features, a military skills translator, a career assessment survey, tips and advice, and professional networking opportunities. H2H.jobs helps guide you every step of the way in finding your next job. For further information on H2H, please visit: <https://h2h.jobs/>

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## **3. What are Helping and Hiring Our Hometown Heroes events?**

A: Helping and Hiring Our Hometown Heroes assists Illinois Veterans with employment opportunities, healthcare, housing, education, training, and specialty programs available for minority, women, disabled and homeless veterans. For further information on how to participate in these free events, please visit: <http://www2.illinois.gov/veterans/programs/Pages/hometown-heroes.aspx>

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OR

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Contact Email: [harry.sawyer@illinois.gov](mailto:harry.sawyer@illinois.gov)

## **4. What is the Army Partnership for Youth Success (PaYS)?**

A: The PaYS program works to connect and partner civilian corporations and companies, as well as local government agencies with Army personnel. PaYS partners project future openings and are matched with soldiers with relevant specialties in

advance of those soldiers exiting the military. For further information on program participation, please visit: <https://www.armypays.com>

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## **Human Resources Training**

### **1. Who is the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES)?**

A: IDES provides unemployment insurance (UI), employment services and guidance to workers, job seekers, and employers through a statewide network of IDES offices and Illinois workNet centers. The agency combines federally-funded job training programs in Illinois into a "workforce development" system via which individuals can find a job or train for a new career. In addition, IDES statewide network of veteran employment representatives and employment specialists stand by to assist Illinois employers with varying employer services. For further information on IDES, please visit:

<http://www.ides.illinois.gov/>

IDES will provide a customized, in-person presentation, at no cost, to all interested human resource personnel on a monthly basis at a pre-designated location, date, and time. The presentation will communicate the value of hiring military veterans and illustrate best practices in veteran recruitment, training, and retention practices.

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### **2. Who is Easter Seals – Operation Employ Veterans?**

A: Easter Seals Operation Employ Veterans is a no cost, internet-based interactive program designed to outline the vast benefits veterans bring to an organization. The three one-hour modules are focused on providing human resource professionals, personnel recruiters, and intermediate supervisors training on the perceptions Veterans face in the workplace around issues such as PTSD, TBI and other disabilities. Each module is designed to stand alone and can be used as a drop-in that can be added to any diversity training program, or as a comprehensive program designed to address individuals who may need workplace accommodations. For an alternative delivery method which includes a CD-ROM copy for \$75, please contact Easter Seals. For further information on Operation Employ Veterans, please visit:

[http://www.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ntl\\_military\\_veterans\\_operation\\_employ\\_veterans](http://www.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ntl_military_veterans_operation_employ_veterans)

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Contact Email: [csalter@easterseals.com](mailto:csalter@easterseals.com)

### **3. Who is Department of Labor – America’s Heroes at Work Veteran Toolkit?**

A: Filled with useful information on hiring Veterans, this Toolkit has been designed to assist and educate employers who want to include Veterans and wounded warriors in their recruitment and hiring initiatives. Featuring a straightforward six-step process, it pinpoints helpful tools and outlines important steps to take when designing a Veterans hiring initiative. To obtain the free tool kit, please contact the Department of Labor – America’s Heroes at Work. For further information on the Veteran Toolkit, please visit: <http://www.americaheroesatwork.gov/>

Contact Name: America’s Heroes at Work  
Contact Phone Number: (866) 4-USA-DOL  
Contact Email: [AmericasHeroesAtWork@dol.gov](mailto:AmericasHeroesAtWork@dol.gov)

### **4. Who is the Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF)?**

A: The mission of the IVMF is to fully leverage the intellectual, human and social capital of higher education, in service to America’s veterans and their families. The IVMF develops education and employment-focused programs in collaboration with industry, government, NGOs and the veteran community, to address the primary economic and public policy concerns of our nation’s servicemen and women, and their families. For further information on IVMF, please visit: <http://vets.syr.edu>

To access “The Guide to Leading Policies, Practices & Resources: Supporting the Employment of Veterans and Military Families”, is a collaborative effort of the Institute and more than 30 private sector employers and supporting organizations to delineate best practices, lessons learned and innovations tied to the recruitment, assimilation, retention and advancement of vets in the workforce. It is available as a PDF at <http://vets.syr.edu/pdfs/guidetoleadingpractices.pdf> for download. In addition, IVMF issued a brief, “The Business Case for Hiring a Veteran: Beyond the Clichés,” which draws from academic literature to suggest a robust, specific and compelling business case for hiring individuals with military background and experience. It is available at <http://vets.syr.edu/pdfs/The%20Business%20Case%20for%20Hiring%20a%20Veteran%203-6-12.pdf>.

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### **5. What are the USERRA 101 and 102 online training modules?**

A: The training assists companies in understanding employee eligibility and job entitlements, employer obligations, and benefits and remedies under the federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). USERRA protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment positions to undertake military service or certain types of service in the National Disaster Medical System. USERRA also prohibits employers from discriminating against past and

present members of the uniformed services, and applicants to the uniformed services. For further information on the USERRA online training, please visit: <http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra>

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## **6. Who is the Employer of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR)?**

A: The ESGR is a Department of Defense organization, established in 1972 to promote cooperation and understanding between Reserve component members and their civilian employers and to assist in the resolution of conflicts arising from an employee's military commitment. ESGR seeks to inform and educate employers about their responsibilities toward employees, who serve in the National Guard and Reserve, as well as to recognize and reward those employers who go “over and above” the requirements of the law. For further information on the ESGR, please visit: <http://www.esgr.mil/site/>

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## **Retention & Support Practices**

### **1. Is there assistance in establishing affinity and/or mentorship programs?**

A: The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs can assist in providing guidance and mentorship in establishing corporate affinity groups and/or mentorship programs. In addition, the following companies have agreed to provide “best practices” on establishing an affinity and/or mentorship program: Sears, AT&T, BMO Financial, and JP Morgan Chase. Contact information is available upon request.

Contact Name: Sears Holdings  
Contact Phone Number: Available Upon Request  
Contact Email: Available Upon Request

Contact Name: AT&T  
Contact Phone Number: Available Upon Request  
Contact Email: Available Upon Request

Contact Name: BMO Financial  
Contact Phone Number: Available Upon Request  
Contact Email: Available Upon Request

Contact Name: JP Morgan Chase  
Contact Phone Number: Available Upon Request

Contact Email:	Available Upon Request
Contact Name:	Caterpillar
Contact Phone Number:	Available Upon Request
Contact Email:	Available Upon Request

## **2. Who is the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA)?**

A: IDVA is a state agency dedicated to empowering veterans, as well as their dependents and survivors, to thrive by assisting them in obtaining the benefits to which they are entitled; by providing long term health care for eligible veterans; by approving educational institutions for GI Bill funding; by administering state grants and benefits to eligible Illinois veterans; and by working with other agencies and non-profits to help veterans address education, mental health, housing, and employment challenges. For further information on IDVA, please visit: <http://www2.illinois.gov/veterans>

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Contact Email:	<a href="mailto:harry.sawyer@illinois.gov">harry.sawyer@illinois.gov</a>

## **3. Who is National Able?**

A: National Able Network is the provider of military-to-civilian employment program models for veterans. National Able's Veterans Services carries out Able's mission as it assists those self-sacrificing individuals of the armed forces in becoming self-reliant members of the workforce while also addressing the physical and emotional damages experienced during their service. National Able Network's Veterans Navigation Assistance Program meets the needs of veterans through a comprehensive service delivery model which addresses personal and professional barriers common among veterans. The integrated program is designed to meet the needs of veterans of all branches, ages, and stages of their career. The program includes specialized job coaching, workplace mentoring, natural workplace supports, customized training, and linkages to supportive services to meet basic needs.

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## **4. Who is CareerOneStop Business Center?**

A: Looking to hire a veteran? Then you probably already know the many reasons that veterans make excellent employees. Their military experience has provided them with education, training, values, leadership skills and teamwork experience.

## **Translate military skills**

Many veterans have specific skills that can be put to good use in your workplace. To learn about military occupations that may share skills and work experience with the jobs you're hiring for, visit the [Civilian-to-Military Occupation Translator](#).